

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 091138

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: WCRP ACTIVITIES -- LEAP DAL AND ROLAND

REF: (A) GENEVA 2783; (B) KUALA LUMPUR 3262; (C) BANGKOK
7867

1. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES LINE TAKEN BY MISOFF CLEARLY REFLECTS USG POSITION AND SHOULD BE PRESSED BOTH WITH MACE AND WITH THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HIMSELF. WE WOULD SUPPORT A UNHCR DECISION TO SEND A HIGH LEVEL REP TO INTERCEDE WITH GOVERNMENTS ON THIS QUESTION. INDEED, WE BELIEVE THIS OFFERS THE BEST CHANCE FOR SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM.

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2. DEPARTMENT, OF COURSE, UNDERSTANDS AND AGREES WITH MACE'S POSITION THAT REAL BOAT CASE REFUGEES HAVE A PRIORITY CLAIM TO RESETTLEMENT OVER MANY ON THE ROLAND AND MOST ON THE LEAP DAL. AS MISOFF CORRECTLY POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, SUCH A CONSIDERATION IS ENTIRELY IRRELEVANT TO THE DESPARATE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE INDIVIDUALS FIND THEMSELVES. FURTHERMORE, WE BELIEVE THAT, IF THE PROBLEM

IS LEFT TO FESTER UNTIL INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION IS FOCUSED PUBLICLY ON IT, THE ENTIRE INDOCHINESE RESETTLEMENT EFFORT COULD BE DAMAGED TO THE DISSERVICE OF ALL INDOCHINESE

REFUGEES, "BOAT CASE" OR NOT.

3. IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT HOMER JACK AND WCRP ARE VERY ACTIVELY SEEKING A SOLUTION TO THEIR DILEMMA. IF, HOWEVER, THERE ARE FURTHER STEPS WHICH MACE BELIEVES THEY SHOULD UNDERTAKE, HE SHOULD SO INFORM JACK. IF POSSIBLE, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL IF AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE HIGH COMMISSIONER COULD BE ARRANGED FOR JACK DURING HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO GENEVA.

4. WITH RESPECT TO BANGKOK'S SUGGESTION PARA 5, REFTEL C, THAT BOAT CASE CONDITIONAL ENTRY NUMBERS BE USED FOR OTHER QUALIFIED INDOCHINESE REFUGEES FROM NON-BOAT CASE REFUGEE CENTERS IN THAILAND, WE CANNOT CONCUR. PROGRAM HAS BEEN EXPLAINED TO THE CONGRESS AND INQUIRERS IN GENERAL AS ONE LIMITED TO REFUGEES ESCAPING BY BOAT. A COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE 100 CE NUMBERS FOR BOAT CASE REFUGEES HAS BEEN MADE TO THE UNHCR AS A PART OF OUR PARTICIPATION IN THAT INTERNATIONAL EFFORT. THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN JUSTIFIED ON THIS BASIS AND WE BELIEVE THAT A SHORT TERM EXPANSION BEYOND THOSE GUIDELINES CURRENTLY IN FORCE WOULD CAUSE WIDESPREAD CONFUSION AND RESENTMENT AND WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO THE OVERALL INTEREST OF THE PROGRAM.

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